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INFO RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 8433  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 7684  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 3107  
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY 9532  
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY 5278  
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SUBJECT: PROFILE: SENIOR MINISTER AND COMMUNICATIONS  
MINISTER CHAUDHARY NISAR ALI KHAN

REF: ISLAMABAD 1376

11. (SBU) Summary: On March 31, PML-N heavyweight Chaudhary Nisar Ali Khan was sworn in as Senior Minister and Minister of Communications. Nisar, as Senior Minister, will be the country's de facto Deputy Prime Minister. Nisar has been elected a member of the National Assembly in every election since 1985. During the 1980s and 1990s, Nisar held a number of influential positions in Pakistan's government. Although he has known President Musharraf for years and considers himself responsible for Musharraf's appointment to Chief of Army Staff, the relationship soured after Nisar refused to acknowledge the legitimacy of Musharraf's takeover in 1999. End Summary.

12. (SBU) On March 31, President Musharraf swore in the first tranche of cabinet members for Prime Minister Yousef Raza Gillani (Reftel). Nisar was sworn in as Senior Minister, Communication Minister, and Minister of Food, Agriculture, and Livestock. As Senior Minister, Nisar will be the de facto "Deputy Prime Minister" of Pakistan and serve as the PML-N liaison to the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) in intra-coalition cooperation. Nisar is a staunch defender of Nawaz Sharif and argues the PML-N has a proven record of cooperating with the U.S. on terrorism and regional security issues.

#### Career History

13. (SBU) The following is a timeline detailing Nisar's political career:

- 1979: Entered politics and elected a member of the Rawalpindi district council.
- 1981: Former President Zia ul-Haq appointed him a member of his Majlis-i-Shura, a hand-picked assembly.
- 1985: Elected to the National Assembly; becomes Parliamentary Secretary for Finance and Economic Affairs.
- 1987-88: Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Resources until Zia dissolved the National Assembly on May 29, 1988.
- 1988: Federal Minister for Petroleum and Natural Resources for six months during the caretaker government.

- 1990-93: Federal Minister for Petroleum and Natural Resources under Sharif's first government.
- 1991: Appointed Special Assistant to the Prime Minister.
- 1997-99: Federal Minister for Petroleum and Natural Resources; also head of the Ministry for Provincial Coordination.
- 2004-2007: Acting parliamentary leader for the PML-N.
- 2008: Senior Minister, Minister of Communications, Minister of Food, Agriculture & Livestock; also acting parliamentary leader of the PML-N.

#### Relationship with Musharraf

14. (SBU) Nisar has known President Musharraf for 25 years and was on friendly terms with him until Musharraf came to power in 1999. Nisar claims that he and his brother are responsible for Musharraf's 1998 appointment to Chief of Army Staff (COAS). He also says that Musharraf offered him the position of PML-Q party chief and a ministerial position. Nisar refused, rejecting the legality of Musharraf's military takeover. Nisar was subsequently kept under house arrest for almost two years, until August 2001.

#### Personal Information

15. (SBU) Nisar was born in Rawalpindi to an influential family on June 11, 1954. Several of Nisar's family members

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have been career military officers: his grandfather died in action during World War I, his father was a Brigadier General, and his elder brother, Lieutenant General Iftikhar Ali Khan (retired) served in high-ranking Pakistan Army positions such as Chief of General Staff and Defense Secretary.

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16. (SBU) Nisar attended Government College in Lahore and earned his Masters degree in international relations from Islamabad's Quaid-i-Azam University (1977). He is married with three daughters and one son. His wife, Shaharзад, teaches English at the Islamabad Convent School. Nisar is an active sportsman and enjoys playing cricket, squash, and tennis. He is addressed as Mr. Chaudhary or Mr. Nisar.

PATTERSON